

# PEARY'S OWN STORY OF VOYAGE TO THE NORTH POLE.

## Gives Brief Summary of Progress of His Wonderful Expedition to the Frozen North—Perils From Ice, Cold and Hunger.

Published by arrangement with the New York Times, the London Times and the Chicago Tribune on behalf of Commander Peary.

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Summary of North Polar Expedition of the Peary Arctic Club.

Battle Harbor, Labrador (via Wireless Cape Ray, N. F.).

The steamer Roosevelt left New York July 6, 1908; left Sydney on July 17; arrived at Cape York, Greenland, August 1; left Etah, Greenland, August 8; arrived Cape Sheridan, at Grantland, September 1; wintered at Cape Sheridan.

The sledge expedition left the Roosevelt February 15, 1909, and started for the north. Arrived at Cape Columbia March 1; passed British record March 2; delayed by open water March 2 and 3; held up by open water March 4 to 11; crossed the eighty-fourth parallel March 11; encountered open lead March 15; crossed eighty-fifth parallel March 18; crossed eighty-sixth parallel March 23; encountered open lead March 23; passed Norwegian record March 23; passed Italian record March 24; encountered open lead March 26; crossed eighty-seventh parallel March 27; passed American record March 28; encountered open lead March 28; held up by open water March 29; crossed eighty-eighth parallel April 2; crossed eighty-ninth parallel April 4; north pole April 6.

On returning, left north pole April 7; reached Cape Columbia April 23, arriving on board Roosevelt April 27.

ROBERT E. PEARY.

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Battle Harbor, Labrador (via Marconi Wireless, Cape Ray, N. F.).—The steamer Roosevelt, bearing the North Polar expedition of the Peary Arctic Club, parted company with the Erik and steamed out of Etah road late in the afternoon of August 18, 1908, setting the usual court for Cape Sabine. The weather was dirty, with fresh southerly winds. We had on board 22 Eskimo men, 17 women and 10 children, 226 dogs and some forty odd walrus.

As we neared Cape Sabine the weather cleared somewhat and we passed close by Three Voort island and Cape Sabine, easily making out with the naked eye the house at Hayes Harbor, occupied by me in the winter of 1901-2.

**Hampered By the Ice.**  
From Cape Sabine north there was so much water that we thought of setting the lug sail before the southerly wind; but a little later appearance of ice to the northward stopped this. There was clean, open water to Cape Albert, and from there scattered ice to a point about abreast of Victoria Head, thick weather and dense ice bringing us some ten or fifteen miles away.

Then we again worked westward and northward till we reached a series of lakes, coming to a stop a few miles south of the Windward's winter quarters at Cape Durville.

**Through Fog and Crystal.**

From here, after some delay, we slowly worked away northeastward through fog and broken ice of medium thickness through one night and the

forenoon of the next day, only emerging into open water and clear weather off Cape Fraser.

From this point we had a clear run through the middle of Robeson channel, uninterrupted by either ice or fog, to Lady Franklin bay. Here we encountered both ice and fog, and, while working along in search of a practicable opening, were forced across to the Greenland coast at Thank God Harbor.

Finally, on September 2, we squeezed around Cape Union and made fast in a shallow niche in the ice, but after some hours we made another short run to Black cape and hung on to a grounded bit of ice.

### Reached Open Water.

At last, a little after midnight of September 5, we passed through extremely heavy running ice into a stream of open water, rounded Cape Rawson and passed Cape Sheridan.

Within a quarter of an hour of the same time we arrived three years before—7 a. m., September 5—we reached the open water extending beyond Cape Sheridan. We steamed up to the end of it, and it appeared practicable at first to reach Porter bay, near Cape Joseph Henley, which I had for my winter quarters.

But, the outlook being unsatisfactory, I went back and put the Roosevelt into the only opening in the ice, being barred close to the mouth of the Sheridan river, a little north of our position three years prior.

### More Snow To Combat.

The season was advanced further than in 1905. There was more snow on the ground and the new ice inside the floe bergs was much thicker.

The work of discharging the ship was commenced at once and rushed to completion. The supplies and equipment were sledged across ice and sea and deposited on shore.

This settlement on the stormy shores of the Arctic ocean was christened Hubbardville.

Hunting parties were sent out on September 10 and a bear was brought in on the 12th and some deer a day or two later.

On September 15 the full work of transporting supplies to Cape Columbia was inaugurated. Marvin, with Dr. Goodsell and Borup and the Eskimos, took 16 sledge loads of supplies to Cape Belknap, and on the 27th the same party started with loads to Porter bay.

### Constant Fight For Life.

The work of hunting and transporting supplies was prosecuted continuously by the members of the party and the Eskimos until November 5, when the supplies for the spring sledge trip had been removed from winter quarters and deposited at various places from Cape Colan to Cape Columbia.

In the latter part of September the movement of the ice subjected the ship to a pressure which lifted her to port some eight or ten degrees, and she did not recover till the following spring.

In October I went on a hunt with two Eskimos across the field and Parr bay and the peninsula, made the circuit of Clements Markham inlet, and returned to the ship in seven days with 15 musk oxen, a bear and a deer.

Later in October I repeated the trip, obtaining five musk oxen, and hunting parties secured some 40 deer.

### Obtained Tidal Observations.

Prof. MacMillan went to Columbia in November and obtained a month of tidal observations, returning in December. In December upon Borup moved the Hecla depot to Cape Colan; Bartlett made a hunting trip overland to Lake Hazen, and Hansen went to Clements Markham inlet.

In the January moon Marvin crossed Robeson channel and went to Cape Bryant for tidal and meteorological observations. Bartlett crossed the channel and made the circuit of New Man bay and explored the peninsula. After he returned Goodsell went to Markham inlet and Borup toward Lake Hazen, in the interior, on hunting trips.

In the February moon Bartlett went to Cape Hecla. Goodsell moved some more supplies from Hecla to Cape Colan, and Borup went to Markham inlet on a hunting trip. On February 5 Bartlett left the Roosevelt with his division for Cape Columbia and Parr bay.

### Followed Bartlett's Trail.

On the last day of February Bartlett, with his pioneer division, accomplished this, and his division got away due north over the ice on March 1. The remainder of the party got away on Bartlett's trail, and I followed an hour later.

We camped 10 miles from Crane City. The easterly wind and low temperature continued. In the second march we passed the British record made by Markham in May, 1876—82.20—and were stopped by open water, which had been formed by the wind after Bartlett passed.

### Halted By Wide Lake.

Marvin came back also for more fuel and alcohol. The wind continued, forming open water all about us. At the end of the fourth march we came upon Bartlett who had stopped by a wide lake of open water. We remained here from March 4 to March 11.

At noon of March 5 the sun, red and shaped like a football by excess reflection, just raised itself above the horizon for a few minutes and then disappeared again. It was the first time I had seen it since October 1.

The sounding of the lead gave 119 fathoms. During this march we crossed the eighty-fourth parallel and traversed a succession of just-frozen leads from a few hundred yards to a mile in width. This march was really simple.

### Free of the Leads.

On the 14th we got free of the leads and came on decent going. While we were making camp a courier from Marvin came and informed me he was on the march in the rear. The temperature was 59.

In the morning I discovered that McMillan's foot was badly frostbitten. This mishap had occurred two or three days before, but McMillan had said nothing about it in the hope that it would come out all right.

A glance at the injury showed me that the only thing was to send him back to Cape Columbia at once. The arrival of Marvin and Borup enabled me to spare sufficient men and dogs to go back with him.

On leaving the camp, the expedition comprised 15 men, 12 sledges and 100 dogs. The next march was satisfactory as regards distance and character of going. In the latter part there were pronounced movements in the ice, both visible and audible. Some leads were crossed, in one of which Borup and his team took a bath and we were finally stopped by an impracticable lead opening in front of us.

### They Overtake Hansen's Party.

We camped in a temperature of 50. At the end of two short marches we came upon Hansen and his party in camp, mending their sledges. We devoted the remainder of the day to overhauling and mending sledges and breaking up our damaged ones for material.

The next morning I put Marvin in the lead to pioneer the trail, with instructions to make two forced marches to bring up our average, which had been cut down by the last two short ones. Marvin carried out his instructions implicitly. A considerable amount of young ice assisted in this.

At the end of the tenth march, latitude 85.23, Borup turned back in command of the second supporting party, having traveled a distance equivalent to Nansen's distance from this far to his farthest north. From this point the expedition comprised 20 men, 10 sledges and 70 dogs. It was necessary for Marvin to take a sledge from here and I put Bartlett and his division in advance to pioneer the trail.

The continual daylight enabled me to make a moderation here that brought my advance and main parties closer together and reduced the likelihood of their being separated by open leads.

### Always on the Hunt.

After Bartlett left camp with Henderson and their division, Marvin and I remained with our divisions 20 hours longer and then followed.

When we reached Bartlett's camp he broke out and went on and we turned in. By this engagement the advance party was traveling while the main party was asleep and vice versa, and I was in touch with my advance party every 24 hours.

At our position at the end of the second march Marvin obtained a satisfactory sight for latitude in clear weather, which placed us at 85.48. This result agreed very satisfactorily with the dead reckoning of Marvin, Bartlett and myself. Up to this time the slight altitude of the sun had made it not worth while to waste time in observations.

The next day Bartlett let himself out, evidently, for a record, and reeled off plump 20 miles. Here Marvin obtained another satisfactory sight on latitude, which gave the position as 86.38 (or beyond the farthest north of Nansen and Abuzzi) and showed that we had covered 50 minutes in latitude in three marches.

### Passed Norwegian's Record.

In these three marches we passed the Norwegian record of 86.14 by Nansen and the Italian record of 86.34 by Cagni.

From this point Marvin turned back in command of the third supporting party. My last words to him were: "Be careful of the leads, my boy."

The north march was over good going, but for the first time since leaving land, we experienced that condition, frequent over these ice fields, of a hazy atmosphere in which the light is equal everywhere. All relief is destroyed, and it is impossible to see for any distance.

I came upon Bartlett and his party, fagged out and temporarily discouraged by the heart-racking work of making a road.

I knew what was the matter with it. They were simply spoiled by the good going on the previous marches. I rallied them a bit, lightened their sledges and set them on, encouraged again.

During the next march we traveled through a thick haze, drifting over the ice before a biting air from the north-east. At the end of the march we

came upon the captain camped beside a wide open lead, with a dense black water sky northwest, north and northeast.

We built our igloos and turned in, but, before I had fallen asleep, I was roused out by a movement of the ice and found a startling condition of affairs—a rapidly widening road of black water ran but a few feet from our igloos. One of my teams of dogs had escaped by only a few feet from being dragged by the movement of the ice into the water.

### Prepared For a Dash.

Kicking out the door of the igloos I called to the captain's men to pack their sledges and be ready for a dash when a favorable chance arrived.

We hurried our things on our sledges, hitched the dogs and moved on to a larger foe west of us. Then, leaving one man to look out for the dogs and sledges, we hurried over to assist the captain's party to join us.

A corner of their raft caught in the ice on our side. For the rest of the night and during the next day the ice suffered the torments of the damned, surging together, opening out, groaning and grinding, while the open water belched black smoke like a prairie fire. Then the motion ceased, the open water closed, the atmosphere to the north was cleared and we rushed across before the ice should open again.

A succession of laterally open leads was crossed, and, after them, some heavy old ice, and then we came to a layer of young ice, some of which buckled under our sledges, and this gave us a straight way of six miles to the north. Then came more heavy old floes, covered with hard snow. This was a good, long march.

The next march was also a long one. It was Bartlett's last hit. He let himself out over a series of large old floes, steadily increasing in diameter and covered with hard snow.

### Supplies Insufficient.

During the last few miles I walked beside him or in advance. He was very solemn and anxious to go farther, but the program was for him to go back from here in command of the fourth supporting party, and there were no supplies for an increase in the main party.

We concluded we were on, or near, the eighty-eighth parallel, unless the north wind had lost us several miles. The wind blew all night and all the following day. At this camp, in the morning, Bartlett started to walk five or six miles to the north to make sure of reaching the eighty-eighth parallel.

While he was gone I selected the 40 best dogs in the outfit and had them doubled, and I picked out five of the best sledges and assigned them expressly to the captain's party. I broke up the seventh for material with which to repair the others, and set Eskimos at this work.

I had given Bartlett this position and post of honor in command of my fourth and last supporting party, and for two reasons—first, because of his magnificent handling of the Roosevelt; second, because he had cheerfully stood between me and many trifling annoyances on the expedition.

### Second Nearest To Pole.

Then there was a third reason. It seemed to me appropriate, in view of the magnificent British record of the Arctic work, covering three centuries, that it should be a British subject who could boast that, next to an American, he had been nearest to the pole.

ROBERT E. PEARY.

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Battle Harbor, Labrador (via Marconi Wireless, Cape Ray, N. F.).—With the disappearance of Bartlett I turned to the problem before me. This was that for which I worked for 32 years; for which I had conserved all my energy on the upward trip; for which I had trained myself as for a race, crushing down every worry about success.

### Marked By Great Loyalty.

My party might be regarded as an ideal which had now come to realization, as loyal and responsive to my will as the fingers of my right hand. Four of them carried the technique of dogs, sledges, ice and cold as their heritage.

My sledges, now that the repairs

were completed, were in good condition. My supplies were ample for 40 days, and, with the reserve represented by the dogs themselves, could be made to last 50.

I decided that I should strain every nerve to make five marches of 15 miles each, crowding these marches in such a way as to bring us to the end of the fifth march long enough before noon to permit the immediate taking of an observation for latitude.

### Plans For Final Dash.

Weather and leads permitting, I believed I could do this. If my proposed distances were cut down by any chance, I had two means in reserve for making up the deficit. First, to make the last march a forced one, stopping to make tea and rest the dogs, but not to sleep; second, at the end of the fifth march to make a forced march with a light sledge, a double team of dogs and one or two of the party, leaving the rest in camp.

### Lean as a Board.

At midnight of April 1, after a few hours of sound sleep, I hit the trail, leaving the others to break camp and follow. As I climbed the pressure ridge back of our igloos I set another hole in my belt, the third since I started. Every man and dog of us was as lean and flat-bellied as a board, and as hard.

### Good Pace For Ten Hours.

I set a good pace for about ten hours. Twenty-five miles took me well beyond the eighty-eighth parallel. While I was building my igloos a long lead formed by the east and southeast of us at a distance of a few miles.

A few hours' sleep and we were on the trail again. All the going was now practically horizontal, we were unhampered and could travel as long as we pleased and sleep as little as we wished.

The weather was fine, and the going like that of the previous day except at the beginning, when pickaxes were required. This and a brief stop at another lead cut down our distance.

But we had made 20 miles in 10 hours and were half way to the eighty-ninth parallel.

### Position Was 89:25.

Before I turned in I took an observation which indicated our position as 89:25. A dense, lifeless pall hung overhead. The horizon was black and the ice beneath was a ghastly, chalky white, with no relief, a striking contrast to the glimmering, sunlit fields of it over which we had been traveling for the previous four days.

The last few hours it was on young ice, and occasionally the dogs were galloping. We made 25 miles or more, the air, the sky and the bitter wind burning the face till it cracked.

### Their Fear Increased.

Up to this time, with each successive march, our fear of an impassable lead had increased. At every inequality of the ice I found myself hurrying breathlessly forward, fearing that it marked a lead, and when I arrived at the summit would catch my breath with relief, only to find myself hurrying on in the same way at the next one.

But on this march, by some strange shift of feeling, this fear fell from me completely. The weather was thick, but it gave me no uneasiness.

A rise in temperature to 15 below reduced the friction of the sledges and gave the dogs the appearance of having caught the spirit of the party.

### Dogs Voice the Spirit.

The more sprightly ones, as they went along with tightly curled tails, frequently tossed their heads with short sharp barks and yelps.

In 12 hours we had made 49 miles. There was no sign of a lead in the march. I had now made my five marches and was in time for a last-noon observation through a temporary break in the clouds, which indicated our position as 89:57.

I quote an entry from my journal some hours later: "The pole at last! The prize of three centuries—my dream and goal for 20 years. Mine at last! I can not bring myself to realize it. It all seems so simple and commonplace."

The first 30 hours at the pole were spent in taking observations; in going some ten miles beyond our camp and some eight miles to the right of it; in taking photographs, planting my flags, depositing my records, studying the horizon with my telescope for possible land, and searching for a practicable place to make a sounding.

### Life in Balance on Return.

Ten hours after our arrival the clouds cleared before a light breeze from our left, and from that time until our departure in the afternoon of April 7 the weather was cloudless and flawless. The minimum temperature during the 30 hours was 83 below, the maximum 12.

I had a brief talk with my men. From now on it was to be a big travel, little sleep and a hustle every minute. We would try, I told them, to double march on the return—that is, to start and cover one of our northward marches, make tea and eat our luncheon in the igloos; then cover another march, eat and sleep a few hours and repeat this daily.

Every day that we gained on the return lessened the chances of a gale destroying the track. Just above the eighty-seventh parallel was a region some 50 miles wide which caused me considerable uneasiness. Twelve hours of strong easterly, westerly or northerly wind would make this region an open sea.

In the afternoon of the 7th we started on our return, having double-fed the dogs, repaired the sledges for the last time and discarded all our spare clothing to lighten the loads.

### No Bottom To the Sea.

All my wire, 1,500 fathoms, was sent down, but there was no bottom. In pulling up the wire parted a few fathoms from the surface, and lead and wire went to the bottom. Off went reel and handle, lightening the sledges still further. We had no more use for them now.

Three marches brought us back to the igloos, where the captain turned back. The last march was in the wild sweep of a northerly gale, with drifting snow and the ice rocking under us as we dashed over it.

South of where Marvin had turned back we came to where his party had built several igloos which delayed by open leads.

### Found Tracks of Marvin.

Fortunately the movement of these leads was simply open and shut and it took considerable water motion to fault the trail seriously.

While the captain, Marvin and, as I found out later, Borup, had been delayed by open leads we seemed to bear a potent charm, and at no single lead were we delayed more than a couple of hours.

We picked up the old trail again north of the seventh igloos, followed it beyond the fifth, and at the big lead lost it finally.

From here we followed the captain's trail, and on April 23 our sledges passed up the vertical edge of the glacier Frigate, a little west of Cape Columbia.

When the last sledge came up I thought my Eskimos had gone crazy. They yelled and called, and danced themselves helpless.

A few hours later we arrived at Crane City, under the bluffs of Cape Columbia, and after putting four rounds of pemmican into each of the faithful dogs to keep them quiet we had at last our chance to sleep.

Never shall I forget that sleep at Cape Columbia. It was sleep, sleep, then turn over and sleep again.

We reached Hecla in one march and the Roosevelt in another.

Before I arrived a flying Eskimo courier from me overtook them, with instructions that the caches were no longer needed, and that they were to concentrate their energies on tidal observations, etc., at Cape Morris, Jesup and north from there.

### Instructions Carried Out.

These instructions were carried out, and after their return in the latter part of May, McMillan made some further tidal observations at other points. The supplies remaining at the various caches were brought in, and on July 18 the Roosevelt left her winter quarters and was driven out into the channel back of Cape Nlon.

She fought her way south in the center of the channel and passed Cape Sabine on August 8, or 30 days earlier than in 1908, and 32 days earlier than the British expedition in 1876.

We picked up Whitney and his party and the stores at Etah. We killed 70 odd walrus for my Eskimos, whom I landed at their homes.

We met the Jeanie off Saunders Island and took over her coal and cleared from Cape York on August 26, one month earlier than in 1906.

### The Big Message Sent.

On September 5 we arrived at Indian Harbor, whence the message "Stars and Stripes nailed to north pole," was sent vibrating south through the crisp Labrador air.

This culmination of long experience, a thorough knowledge of the conditions of the problem, gained in the last expedition, together with a new type of sledge which reduced the work of both dogs and driver, and a new type of camp cooler which added to comfort and increased the hours of sleep of the members of the party, combined to make the present expedition an agreeable improvement upon the last in regard to the rapidity and effectiveness of its work and the lessened discomfort, and strain upon the members of the party.

As to the personnel, I have again been particularly fortunate. Captain Bartlett is just Bartlett, tireless, sleepless, enthusiastic, whether on the bridge or in the crew's nest or at the hold of a sledge in the field.

The members of the crew and the foremen were a distinct improvement over those of the last expedition.

And for the splendid four who stood beside me at the pole a boat and tent to require them for their energy and the hardship and toll they underwent to help their friend Peary to the north pole.

### Tribute To Arctic Club.

But all of this—the dearly bought years of experience, the magnificent strength of the Roosevelt, the splendid energy and enthusiasm of my party, the loyal faithfulness of my Eskimos—could have gone for naught but for the faithful necessities of war furnished so loyally by the members and friends of the Peary Arctic Club, and it is no detraction from the living to say that to no single individual has the fine result been more signally due than to my friend, the late Morris K. Jesup, the first president of the club. Their assistance has enabled me to tell the last of the great earth stories—the story the world has been waiting to hear for 300 years, the story of the discovery of the north pole.

ROBERT E. PEARY.